



A Vision for Excellence

Strategic Plan

February 2020 – February 2025

Approved by the Board on 24.2.2020

Introduction

Plymouth CAST is a Catholic multi-academy trust of 35 schools and 1 nursey across seven local authorities in Cornwall, Devon and Dorset. We employ 1500 staff and educate 7,300 pupils. The trust was established in 2014. We are forward-facing and confident about the future with a refreshed vision and values, stronger leadership capacity, improved financial controls and budget-setting procedures and clarity of delegated powers in a revised scheme of delegation.

Our principal aim as a trust is to ensure that every one of our pupils is educated in a good or outstanding Catholic school, fulfils his or her academic potential in a safe and stimulating environment, inspired by the Gospel, and leaves us with the qualifications, skills and qualities that will help them to thrive in adult life in modern Britain - with a vision of service for humanity, especially the vulnerable.

We will move forward above all with a spirit of collaboration across the trust and a willingness to engage with other trusts and agencies to provide the best possible education for our pupils. We are one trust, one family of Catholic schools and with this plan, underpinned by our vision and values, we have a clear aim and a clear pathway to achieve that aim. With the energy and commitment we have in our trust, I have no doubt at all that we will fulfil our mission.

Raymond Friel
Chief Executive Officer

Our Vision

The Church insists on the highest standards of academic achievement in its schools, so that our young people leave us as ‘agents of change’ – educated and caring people who have the qualifications, knowledge and skills they need to flourish as human beings and make the world a better place.

Inspired by our Teacher, Jesus Christ, and his good news to the poor, we are especially committed to those who are disadvantaged. We are determined that a child’s start in life need not determine their future. We are committed to the well-being of the earth, our common home, inspired by the example of Pope Francis: to live wisely, think deeply and love generously.

In all our schools we will develop a culture of high expectation and aspiration, based on our fundamental belief in the dignity of all human beings. We want all our pupils to flourish in safe, happy and enriching environments, taught and supported by adults who are skilled, motivated and committed to our shared vision and values.

We work together as one Trust, one family of schools, one community inspired by a vision for excellence. We commit ourselves to deepen our mission and raise standards in order to provide an excellent Catholic education for every child in our care.

Our Mission

Our mission is to be a community of outstanding schools in which our pupils flourish in safe, happy and stimulating environments and leave us with the knowledge and skills, personal qualities and aspirations, to make the world a better place, inspired by the Gospel.

Our Values – Gospel values

The values which inspire our work and inform the ethos and decision-making in our schools are the values of the Gospel, based on the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew (Chapter 5: 1-11). They represent a vision for a renewed humanity, a new way of being and belonging as taught by Jesus Christ.

Humility, seeing life as a gift

Compassion, empathy

Kindness, gentleness

Justice, working for a fairer world

Forgiveness, reconciliation

Integrity, do what you say

Peace, committed to peacemaking, non-violence

Courage, standing up for truth

Our Aims – our permanent priorities

1. To ensure that every pupil is educated in a safe and stimulating environment, inspired by the Gospel, and leaves us with a vision of service for humanity, especially the vulnerable.
2. To ensure that every pupil receives a “good” or better quality of education, fulfils his or her academic potential and leaves us with the qualifications, skills and qualities that will help them to thrive in adult life in modern Britain
3. To ensure that our pupils are educated in a financially sustainable Trust which provides the resources and equipment to fulfil strategic aims 1 & 2.

Our Five-Year Goals

Education, Catholicity and Safeguarding

1. All schools assessed as "good" or better (including S48 reviews)
2. PP children achieve in line with non-PP children, nationally.
3. Appropriate facilities and fully trained staff for SEND pupils
4. Meet the Bishops' Conference requirement that Catholics are recruited to reserved posts

Finance and Governance

1. Trust is financially secure holding reserves of 2%
2. Ensure that reinvestment funds of £1 million are generated every year

Having reaffirmed our “Aims” and our “Goals” in November 2019 the Board, using both the outcome from our SWOT analyses and consideration of other external factors, reviewed how the goals were going to be achieved and specifically in what respects the major themes of our 2017 strategy needed to be modified.

A summary of the 2017 strategy and the updated November 2019 version is shown below and is subject to annual review:-

TURNAROUND STRATEGY (2017)	NOVEMBER 2019 REVISION
<i>Significant central control (eg Finance)</i>	<i>Significant central control of finance and services. Schools keep voluntary funds.</i>
<i>Greater uniformity of systems</i>	<i>Conformity of all systems</i>
<i>Central services</i>	<i>As above</i>
<i>Clear lines of accountability</i>	<i>Clear lines of accountability in relation to internal organisation, the DSC and LGBs / IABs</i>
<i>Schools focused mainly on educational standards, safeguarding and Catholicity via ESM team</i>	<i>Schools focused on educational standards, safeguarding and Catholicity</i>
<i>“Responsibility” removed from LGBs</i>	<i>LGBs to be retained at school level subject to the new S of D.</i>

<i>Movement towards skill, knowledge and resource sharing across schools (eg Clusters, SBMs etc)</i>	<i>Focus on individual schools but with clusters as the support mechanism to facilitate skills, knowledge and resource sharing.</i>
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<i>Keep all schools open</i>	<i>Keep all schools open</i>
<i>Schools determine curriculum</i>	<i>Curriculum to be either school based or by cluster.</i>
<i>Schools receive full funding according to pupil numbers etc except for top slice</i>	<i>Subject to current review, GAG to be pooled (but not PP)</i>
<i>Schools prepare budgets and are individually required to achieve an in-year surplus, each year .</i>	<i>Budgeting to be by school in conjunction with the Centre (via SBMs). Centre has sign-off.</i>
<i>Schools determine their own structures</i>	<i>Schools to operate to standard structures according to size. Any local variations to be approved by the Centre.</i>
<i>Pragmatic approach to alternative structures at senior level eg Executive Heads,</i>	<i>Pragmatic approach to senior level structures in schools. To be determined by Centre.</i>
<i>Historic reserves are “ear-marked” to schools which created them</i>	<i>All reserves to be held and used under central control</i>
<i>Progress by evolution not revolution</i>	<i>“Intervention” required to achieve financial goals. SLT proposal to be submitted to the Board outlining “what” and “when”.</i>

The next step in development of our strategic plan is the production of functional strategies and action plans by the Executive team.